

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-25

INFO OCT-01 ADP-00 SMI-01 AID-20 CIAE-00 COME-00 EB-11

FRB-02 INR-10 NSAE-00 RSC-01 TRSE-00 XMB-07 OPIC-12

CIEP-02 LAB-06 SIL-01 SAL-01 OMB-01 NSC-10 SS-14

STR-08 CEA-02 PA-03 PRS-01 USIA-12 RSR-01 /152 W

----- 055572

R 291735 Z MAR 73

FM USMISSION BERLIN

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1601

INFO AMEMBASSY BONN

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

USMISSION NATO

AMEMBASSY PARIS

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E. O. 11652: N/ A

TAGS: PFOR, EFIN, GE

SUBJECT: POSSIBLE GDR SALES OF ART TREASURES

1. WEST GERMAN PRESS HAS BEEN CARRYING REPORTS FOR MONTH NOW THAT GDR IS PLANNING TO SELL SIGNIFICANT WORKS OF ART FROM ITS MUSEUMS ON WORLD MARKET TO RELIEVE ITS HARD CURRENCY DIFFICULTIES. FIGURES RUN AS HIGH AS DM 60 MILLION. GDR "NINCHKA" IS SAID TO BE SANS SOUCI DIRECTOR MUECKENBERGER. CDU ANXIETY OVER THIS POTENTIAL LOSS OF GERMAN ART ALLEGEDLY HAS REACHED POINT WHERE RHEINLAND- PFALZ CULTURE MINISTER VOGEL FELT IT NECESSARY TO WRITE FRG STATE SECRETARY GRABERT.

2. ALTHOUGH ACCORDING TO LATEST WEST GERMAN PRESS REPORTS, GDR HAS DROPPED ART SALES PROJECT, IT EVIDENT THAT ESTABLISHMENT AND MAINTAINANCE OF NUMEROUS EAST GERMAN DIPLOMATIC MISSIONS WILL FURTHER TAX LIMITED GDR HARD CURRENCY RESOURCES. IT SEEMS LIKELY, THEREFORE, THAT NEW
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AND SOME UNUSUAL AVENUES FOR GENERATION OF HARD CURRENCY
BEING EXPLORED. IN THIS CONNECTION, WE WONDER IF VOGEL' S
REPORTED REACTION SUGGESTS THAT FRG MIGHT HAVE PREFERRED
TO BUY GDR ART TREASURES ITSELF RATHER THAN SEE THEM GO
TO THIRD COUNTRIES. KLEIN

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*** Current Handling Restrictions *** n/a

*** Current Classification *** LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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